

PPM 440

ASSESSMENT FOR DETERMINING VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION NEEDS

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GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

440.01 PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION NEEDS

The purpose of the assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs (comprehensive assessment) is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the individual's vocational strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and career interests, as a basis for the selection of an appropriate employment outcome and necessary vocational rehabilitation services to be included in an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

[REQUIRED PRACTICE: The Vocational Rehabilitation Program is intended to assist individuals with obtaining appropriate employment that is consistent with each individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and career interests. Consistent with that standard, the assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs must, therefore, explore the vocational options of each individual

relative to his or her unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and career interests.]

440.02 REQUIREMENT TO CONDUCT THE ASSESSMENT

(1) Except as noted in paragraph (2) of this section, the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor must conduct a comprehensive assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs for each eligible individual preparatory to the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

(2) The comprehensive assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs described in paragraph (1) of this section need not be conducted:

(A) for any individual whose record of services is closed prior to IPE development and implementation (i.e., for individuals determined to be no longer eligible for services or who exit the program because they have refused services, have moved out of state, have failed to cooperate, have chosen to pursue or remain in sheltered work, etc.);

(B) (if the Vocational Rehabilitation Program is operating under an order of selection) for any eligible individual who is assigned to an unserved priority category closed to services under the order and is, therefore, placed on the deferred services waiting list (in status 81) as described in PPM chapter 430.

[REQUIRED PRACTICE. An assessment is not conducted in either of the situations described in paragraph (2) of this section because an IPE is not developed in either instance and the sole reason for conducting the comprehensive assessment is to provide the information required for plan development.]

440.03 INFORMATION USED FOR THE ASSESSMENT

(1) The assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs must be based, to the maximum extent possible and appropriate, and in accordance with confidentiality and disclosure requirements, on:

(A) existing information obtained for the purposes of the assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services described in PPM chapter 420;

(B) to the extent appropriate, determinations made by qualified officials of other programs that serve individuals with disabilities, especially officials of the Social Security Administration and education programs responsible for the public education of students with disabilities;

(C) additional information that can be provided by the individual and, if appropriate, by the family of the individual; and

(D) direct observations of the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, appropriately recorded in the record of services, with respect to the individual's vocational strengths, personal and family resources, vocational priorities and concerns, abilities and capabilities, and career interests.

(2) The assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs must also include, to the degree needed to describe the individual's vocational strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests:

(A) an assessment of the personality, career interests, interpersonal skills, intelligence and related functional capacities, educational achievements, work experience, vocational aptitudes, personal and social adjustments, and employment opportunities of the individual and the medical, psychiatric, psychological, and other pertinent vocational, educational, cultural, social, recreational, and environmental factors that affect the employment and rehabilitation needs of the individual;

(B) an appraisal of the patterns of work behavior of the individual and services needed for the individual to acquire occupational skills and to develop work attitudes, work habits, work tolerance, and social and behavior patterns necessary for successful job performance, including the use of work in real job situations to assess and develop the capacities of the individual to perform adequately in a work environment;

(C) to the extent necessary to assess and develop the capacities of the individual to perform in a work environment, referral for the provision of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices; and

(D) an exploration of the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations through the use of appropriate trial work experiences.

(3) The assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs must include, to the extent needed by the individual, the provision of:

(A) vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance, including information and referral services for services and benefits from other programs, information required for the individual to exercise his or her informed choice with respect to his or her IPE and its contents, and other necessary counseling and guidance; and

(B) appropriate and necessary supporting services.

(4) The comprehensive assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs must also include consideration of labor market information, to determine either:

(A) the availability of and demand for workers in the type of employment being considered; or,

(B) if such employment is unavailable locally, whether or not the individual is able and willing to relocate to a different job market if necessary to pursue employment of type selected.

[REQUIRED PRACTICE. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor may obtain performance-based information in order to determine whether an individual's informed choice of an employment outcome is consistent with his or her vocational strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests during the comprehensive assessment of vocational rehabilitation needs. Such performance-based information may be sought during the comprehensive assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs by: (1) conducting situational assessments of the individual's performance; (2) providing trial work experiences; or (3) establishing specific short-term objectives in the IPE with appropriate performance expectations (e.g., enrolling the individual in a training program for a one-semester trial period and assessing the individual's achievement of specified academic and other goals during training) that measure the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests (RSA-PD-97-04, August 19, 1997).]

440.04 AUTHORITY FOR CONDUCTING THE ASSESSMENT

Each assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs must be conducted by a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor or by another qualified professional employed by the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, and cannot be delegated to any other individual or agency.

440.05 LIMITATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT

Each assessment must be designed to identify the rehabilitation needs of the individual, determine the individual's vocational strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and career interests, and develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

440.06 INTEGRATED SETTINGS REQUIREMENT

All services provided for the comprehensive assessment must be provided in the most integrated settings possible consistent with the informed choice of the individual.

440.07 TIMELINESS REQUIREMENT

The comprehensive assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs must be completed in a timely manner and an IPE must be developed, agreed to, and signed as soon as possible, but not more than 120 calendar days from the date on which the individual was certified to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, unless the individual first exits the program or the individual or his or her representative and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor agree to an extension of specified duration.

440.08 COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Consistent with the requirements of this chapter, the assigned Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor or another qualified professional employed by the Vocational Rehabilitation Program must:

- (1) design and conduct the comprehensive assessment;
- (2) record all information resulting from the assessment in the individual's record of services; and
- (3) provide all information obtained and pertinent to the selection of an employment outcome and the nature and scope of necessary services to the individual, the individual's representative, or other individuals or entities that will be assisting the individual with the development of all or any portion of the plan of services, as described in PPM 450.06.

RECORD OF SERVICES DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**440.09 RECORD OF SERVICES CONTENT REQUIREMENTS**

For each comprehensive assessment of vocational rehabilitation needs completed, the record of services for the individual must include:

- (1) documentation that the assessment was provided, in accordance with section 440.02 of this chapter
- (2) all information on which the assessment was based, as described in section 440.03 of this chapter;
- (3) documentation sufficient to demonstrate that—
 - (A) the assessment has examined the individual's vocational strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and career interests, in accordance with section 440.05 of this chapter,
 - (B) any assessment-related services were provided in the most integrated settings possible, consistent with the informed choice of the individual, as required by section 440.06 of this chapter, and
 - (C) the timeliness requirement for the assessment and IPE development described in section 440.07 has been met; and
- (4) documentation sufficient to demonstrate that the responsibilities of the Counselor described in section 440.08 have been met.

440.10 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM COMPLIANCE

All required information, data, and documents must be incorporated into and maintained in the record of services for the individual in a manner consistent with Indiana Rehabilitation Information System (IRIS) requirements.

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations 34 CFR §§361.5(b)(6); 361.29; 361.45(b)(1); 361.45(f); RSA-PD-97-04 (August 19, 1997).]

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